

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN WASHINGTON, D. C., JULY 9, 1920.

The first meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1921 was held in its office at 1729 New York Avenue, northwest, Washington, D. C., Friday, July 9, 1920.

The following members were present:

Mr. Moore, Chairman;
Mr. Wm. Mitchell Kendall;
Mr. Greenleaf;
Mr. Fraser;

also Major C. S. Ridley, Secretary and
Executive Officer.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PRECEDING MEETING: The minutes of the preceding meeting held in Washington, D. C., June 4, 1920, were approved.
2. RESOLUTION IN RE ALLOTMENTS: RESOLVED, That to conform with the requirements of Section 5679 of the Revised Statutes of the United States the funds appropriated for the Commission of Fine Arts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1921, be made available at any time during the year and that no special allotments by quarters be made.
3. MAINE MEMORIAL COIN: Mr. Fraser reported that the model of the design for the Maine Memorial Coin made under his supervision and Mr. Cochrane, by Franchisi, is now complete and submitted photographs thereof. The Commission approved the model and directed that the Secretary of the Treasury be advised accordingly.
4. VICTORY MEDAL: Mr. Moore reported having received several letters from Mr. Adams regarding the production of the Victory Medal which indicate that the firms producing the medals are experiencing considerable difficulty in pro-

ducing the required number, or at least four million. The Commission recommended conferring with the Quartermaster General so that he may be informed of the facts since it is known he desires that every medal produced shall be of the required standard.

5. ZONING: Major Ridley reported that in accordance with the Act of Congress, approved March 1, 1920, the Zoning Commission is now zoning Washington, and they have gotten to the point where they have completed a tentative map. This map is now being criticized by various officials of the city. On that map the District of Columbia is divided into four types - residential, first commercial, second commercial, and industrial. The residential (including parks and public property) is shown in white; the first commercial in black; the second commercial in blue, and the industrial in red. Major Ridley read a copy of the revised Zoning Regulations which have been adopted specifying the character of buildings and establishments which are to prevail for each of the four types above mentioned. Attention was called to the fact that the first commercial district will generally follow street car lines and main thoroughfares. The Commission expressed its general approval of the map, and suggested a few minor changes.

Major Ridley reported that the Fort Drive is protected. Mr. Greenleaf urged the importance of a parkway from Piney Branch on to Sixteenth Street. Major Ridley reported that work along this line is now underway there.

Major Ridley advised that the height map is now about ready, and that the city is to be entirely zoned by September first.

6. MEMORIAL TABLET, JAPANESE CIVILTY TEMPLE: Major Ridley reported that under date of June 17, 1920, he received the following letter from Mr. Paul Kiyoshi Misada, designer, 1145 Connecticut Avenue, of this city:

"This summer, I am planning to visit Japan, and while there I would like to make a tablet of bronze cast, as artistic and characteristic as Japanese can. The question of stone whether to use native stone here or bring one from away Japan, is now to be considered.

It was my intention to give this to the park of Washington as a humble token of my appreciation of pleasant life in America where I lived some ten odd years, and I do not know how many more springs I may enjoy seeing these trees in bloom on the banks of the Potomac. And I feel justified to get your consent before going ahead with my plan. While in Japan I will take the matter up with Mr. Ozaki, Mayor of Tokyo at the time the presentation of the trees took and if he so advises me, I shall be only too glad to have the City of Tokyo be the donator of said tablet.

With suggestion of the plan, I herewith show a rough sketch of the tablet, and location or the detail could be thought over later. Trusting to have the pleasure of seeing you soon, I remain."

Mr. Hisada appeared before the Commission saying he was prompted to send this letter and desired to take up this matter particularly as an appreciation of his fourteen years of residence here, and because of continued inquiries made as to how the gift of the Cherry Trees came about, by the erection of a memorial this could be made known to the public as a matter of record; that at the present time there seems to be a question whether the Japanese Cherry Trees were given by the citizens of Tokyo to Mrs. Taft or to the United States.

Mr. Moore quoted from Mrs. Taft's book "Recollections of Full Years" (Page 362):

"I also thought we might have a Japanese Cherry Blossom season in Potomac Park. Both the soil and climate encouraged such an ambition, so I suggested that all the blooming cherry trees obtainable in the nurseries of this country be secured and planted. They were able to find about one hundred only. Then the Mayor of Tokyo, having learned of our attempt to bestow the high flattery of imitation upon his country, offered to send us two thousand young trees. We accepted them with grateful pleasure, but one consignment was found to be afflicted with some contagious disease and had to be destroyed. I watched those that were planted later with great interest and they seem to be doing very well. I wonder if any of them will ever

attain the magnificent growth of the ancient and dearly loved cherry trees of Japan."

Major Ridley advised that the records had been consulted and that under date of September 7, 1909, Hon. Alvey A. Adee, Acting Secretary of State, transmitted to the Secretary of War a copy of the following communication from the Japanese Embassy conveying the information that the City of Tokyo had decided to present to the city of Washington two thousand trees raised in Japan:

"August 30, 1909.

Sir:

In reference to the conversation which passed between Secretary Knox and Ambassador Takahira on July 12, last, I have the honor to announce to you, under instructions from my Government, that the news that the planting of cherry trees along the Potomac Drive of the city of Washington is contemplated having reached Japan, the city of Tokyo, prompted by a desire to show its friendly sentiments toward its sister capital city of the United States, has decided to offer as a gift two thousand young trees, raised in Japan.

As regards the date of their expected arrival in this country, I shall have the pleasure of informing you later when I shall receive further communication from Tokyo.

Accept, etc.

K. MARSUI.

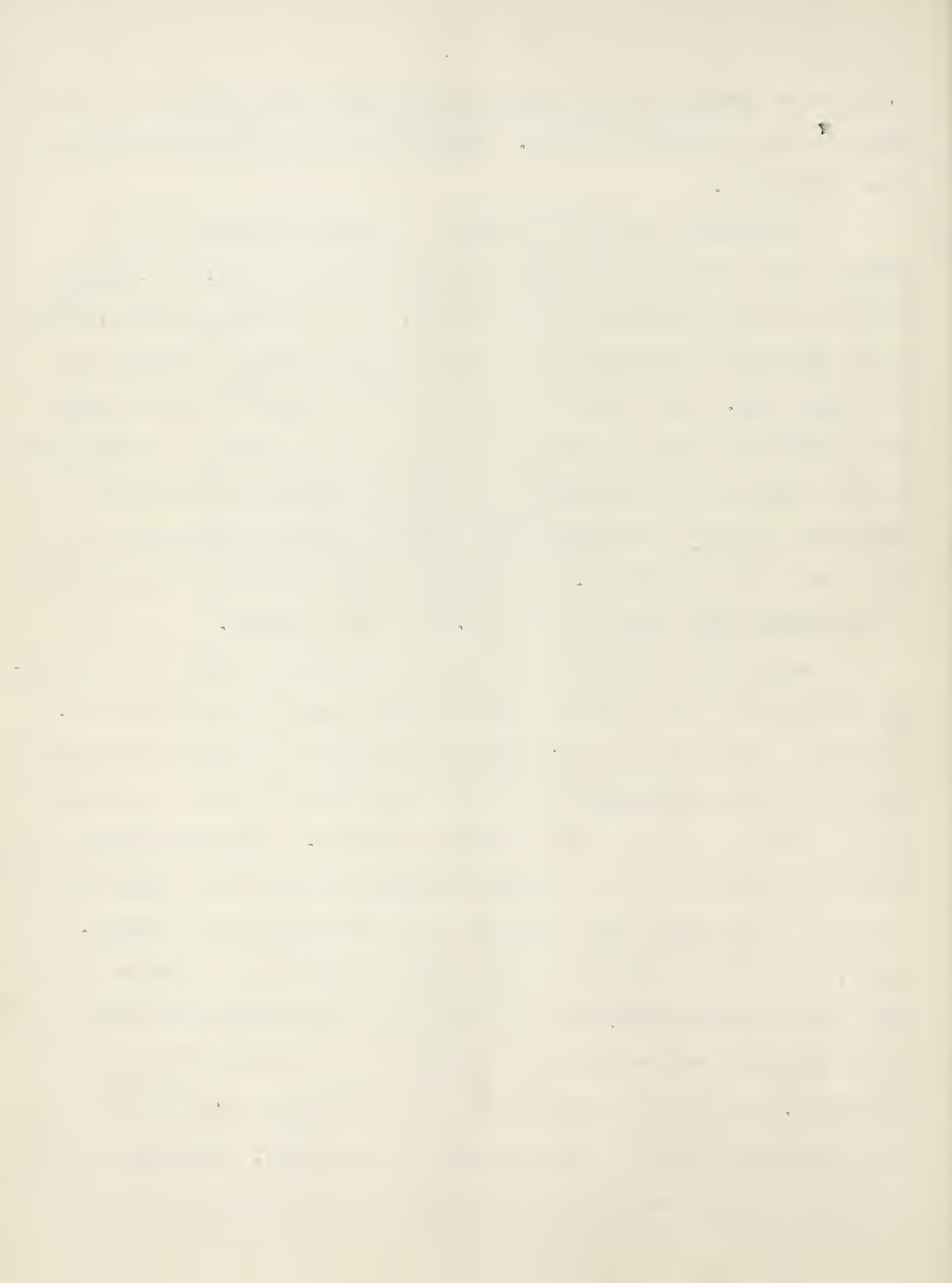
Honorable Alvey A. Adee,
Acting Secretary of State."

The Commission thought it desirable to have this matter definitely settled as early as possible. As to the design the Commission did not approve of a boulder as proposed, with a bronze tablet attached thereto, and suggested to Mr. Hisada that he secure a designer in Tokyo to prepare a design for the memorial that will stand up by itself and be a work of Japanese art; that it could be of stone with an inscription, but such stone should come from Japan.

Mr. Hisada was assured of the interest and cooperation of the Commission in this matter, and was so advised by letter. (Exhibit A, which included the suggestions of the Commission).

7. REY MEMORIAL, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND: Major Ridley reported that on Thursday, July 8, 1920, Major Joseph W. Shirley, Chairman, and Mr. W. W. Remarts, Secretary, of the Baltimore City Plan Committee, were in conference with Mr. Moore, and Mr. Greenleaf, here, regarding the site for the Rey Memorial, and plans for Fort McHenry Park. Major Shirley said that since the inspection on the grounds of the Commission of Fine Arts on March 25, 1920, and the approval of the Commission at their meeting on the following day to locate the Monument four hundred feet further south subject to the authorities in Baltimore giving assurance that the entire work will be carried out, they had made a survey of the area and were ready to submit plans showing curbs, grades, etc., also cross sections.

Major Shirley advised that it was impossible at this time for the authorities in Baltimore to give assurance "that the entire work would be carried out". The area was given for use of the city by the Government a few years ago, but when the war broke out the Government took the area back again and used it for hospital purposes, and it has not since been returned to the city. If the authorities in Baltimore, therefore, were to do anything to develop the area at the present time it would be on the basis of what rights they would have thereon in the future. However, Major Shirley thought it might be deemed desirable by the Government to retain the area since Baltimore has a fifty million dollar harbor scheme under way, and this particular section around Fort McHenry would serve as the "Government Reservation". The Immigration Station is now located there, and the Government Light House Station might well be established in the vicinity. Furthermore, since the soldiers have been removed from the hospitals the Public Health Service has



taken up some of the buildings. There would also be opportunity to establish a Marine Hospital on the area.

Major Shirley said that their plans were submitted principally for the basis of argument, and that they desired if possible a definite decision from the Commission of Fine Arts as to the elevation for the Key Monument, and an agreement on the plan for the immediate vicinity of the Monument so that the Monument could be erected. The plan should then be filed in the office of the Secretary of War and should serve as the basis as the area would be developed.

The Commission was asked at this meeting whether the Monument shall be erected at an elevation of 26 instead of 29 and the grades to be used in the immediate vicinity. The former site selected for the Monument was thought undesirable since it would be too near to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad tracks, which Company in enlarging its own activities might erect structures which would interfere with the beauty of the location.

Mr. Niehaus appeared before the Commission in behalf of the Key Memorial and reported that the Company that was to furnish the marble has gone into the hands of a Receiver, and that he had been having some difficulty regarding this matter, but that he has now been definitely informed that all the marble required is at hand and ready for shipment. Mr. Niehaus said he desired to begin on the work of erecting the Memorial as soon as the question of site and the grading is definitely fixed. The Commission reported that circumstances were such now as to make it impossible to have the Fort McHenry area developed in the immediate future, but in order that the Key Memorial could be erected the Commission recommended giving the statue such setting as will make it feasible later to develop the park according to the plans which have been named. The Commission decided that the top of the curbing of the circle surrounding the Key Memorial Monument shall be at the grade 27.0" above datum. This will mean raising the grade one

foot with a gradual slope which is not considered excessive. Major Shirley was advised accordingly. (Exhibit B).

8. GOLF COURSE, EAST POTOMAC PARK: Major Ridley reported that the opening of the Golf Course for players took place on Thursday morning, July 8, 1920; the golf grounds cover an area of 112 acres, and the course is approximately 4,500 feet in length, the turf is in excellent condition, the Field House is ready for use, and the necessary regulations have been issued. Quite a good many players have begun to play on the course. It is the first public golf course worthy of the name in the National Capital.

9. ZERO MILESTONE: The Commission of Fine Arts, to whom was submitted the design of the Zero Mile Stone, authorized by Act of Congress dated June 5, 1920, for erection on the meridian of the District of Columbia, report the general form of the Mile Stone is acceptable. It is understood that the stone is to be granite, in which case the carving should be omitted, as the design is too complicated to be worked out well in that material. The top should be simplified, the lettering should be carefully chiseled, showing the use of the Roman letter, the walk around the Mile Stone should be omitted. The Commission questions the propriety of allowing the names of individuals appear inscribed on any monument in this area and suggest that this point be called to the attention of the Secretary of War for a specific authorization from him. The Commission will be pleased to have a new study made in conformity with the foregoing suggestions.

10. GRANT MEMORIAL AND BOTANIC GARDEN FENCE: A tentative drawing showing a gravel walk area to extend eastward to the present stone flag sidewalk on First Street and symmetrical with the Memorial was submitted. Also a blueprint showing a tentative walk arrangement on all four sides of the Grant Memorial. It was felt by the Commission that the walk arrangement should be resubmitted at a larger scale and to embody the following recommendations: The Sundry Civil Appropria-

tion Act for the fiscal year 1931 containing the provision for removal of part of the Botanic Garden fence to the effect that the large stone or brick gateposts on the east side of the garden shall be taken down to a level with the substructure which also is made of brick or stone, the Commission recommend that the substructure be removed so as to bring the opening made by the removal of the gateway symmetrical with the Grant Memorial; and further that the iron fence be removed from the gateway to a point 208 feet more or less to the northeast corner of the garden, and to 176 feet more or less to the southeast corner of the garden; also that the stub end of the walk to the west of the Grant Memorial on the main axis of the garden as at present be eliminated; and that the walk treatment around the Grant Memorial shall be of gravel path construction, temporary in character.

11. **MALL SYSTEM:** The Commission advised the following with regard to the laying out of the Mall System: In the laying out of the Mall System, the pre-eminently important line is the longitudinal axis to the Washington Monument. All other lines must be strictly parallel with it. The ultimately completed Drive will have long straight parallel lines, and any slight divergence of these lines from the straight will be very apparent and most unfortunate.

It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that wherever any small section of work is laid out, whether of building front or of sidewalk, or of drive or curb, that that section shall rigidly conform to the theoretical lines of the Mall System, without the slightest divergence. As a surveying matter when transferring to a parallel line from a given axis line, it is desirable to make the offsets a long distance apart and then line in accurately between. There will be constantly reasons why this cannot be done in the putting in of small sections of the Mall treatment and in the lining up of buildings. In many instances it may be necessary to take offsets at comparatively short distances apart and, moreover, offsets of considerable length (for instance the treatment in front of the Freer Gallery).

Whenever anything of this sort is to be done, because of its critical importance, it should be by the most careful and scientific surveying, carefully checked.

As an absolute essential and preliminary to all this, the precise determination of the central longitudinal axis, by means of permanent carefully placed hubs at convenient, frequent intervals, is a preliminary. If that preliminary lay out has not already been done and the main axis established beyond possibility of error, it ought to precede any further work. The necessity for the establishment of this actual line is shown in a marked degree by the location of the Grant Memorial, which is off the Mall axis. It is suggested that when the actual line is established a drawing shall be made and the structures already erected shall be laid out with reference thereto for the purpose of checking. These structures include the Grant Memorial, the Meade Memorial, the New National Museum, the Freer Gallery, the Agricultural Department, the Washington Monument, the Reflecting Pool, and the Lincoln Memorial. That drawing should hang in the Commission Room, so as to familiarize the members of the Commission, present and future, with the progress of the work. This drawing should also show those sections of the Mall Plan which are executed, such as East Seaton Park and the area in front of the Freer Gallery.

12. DECISION AS TO CURB FOR THE MALL ROADS: A standard form of curbing, flat on top, vertical face, three-fourths ($3/4$) inch round at the exposed edge, the edge toward the sod rubbed. The height should be five (5) inches and the width seven (7) inches; also the crown of the road should equal the height of the curb.

13. PEARY MEMORIAL: Mr. Davis submitted a revised design for the Peary Memorial at Arlington, showing a large globe and the pedestal reduced. The Commission approved the design.

14. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, PLANTING PLAN: The Commission called on Colonel H. A. Smith and Major J. B. Gowen, Executive Officer of the Army War College, concerning a planting plan prepared a few years ago, but which because of the war had been left practically untouched. Mr. Kendall explained details of the plan and called attention to the desirability of having trees south of the Army War College grouped on either side of the building rather than planted in a semicircle as at present. Major Gowen advised that it was their desire to insert an item in their statement of estimates in the next appropriation bill which will provide for the carrying out of the plan.

15. BUST OF GENERAL PERSHING: The Commission inspected a bust of General Pershing at the Army War College made by Robert Aitken. The advice of the Commission was desired as to setting and the Commission recommended a smaller and more suitable pedestal for it.

16. FREER GALLERY, GRADING PLAN: A tracing cloth plan in ink was submitted showing the grading on the center line for all walks and drives, together with sections on paper for the same; also similar section for the south curb of the proposed entrance drive.

The attention of the Commission was called to the change of walk location for the six-foot walk in the vicinity of the Aircraft Building and in the vicinity of the hedge near the Smithsonian Institution; and also the location of the eight-foot walk immediately east of the Gallery.

The plan was approved subject to further study in order to be sure that there is a slightly convex, instead of concave, effect of surface in front of the Freer Gallery between the steps and the south drive; also subject to the path from B Street paralleling the east side of the Freer Gallery is made straight parallel with the building and so located as to avoid cutting trees. The walk should begin at the point 32.6 in the B Street sidewalk. The walk immediately east of the

Gallery was thus changed so as to center between a 11" maple and a 14" maple and to run parallel to the east face of the Gallery. This has also been embodied on the plan.

Mr. Greenleaf was agreeable to leave the matter of grades regarding the walks to Mr. Payne.

The two walks passing the Aircraft Building on the west and the Gallery on the east were considered temporary by Mr. Moore and it was, therefore, decided to construct these walks of macadam.

The Commission decided in favor of a curb five inches in height and seven inches broad, surface of top to be horizontal, built of cement with a $3/4$ inch round exposed corner. It was also decided to have the crown of both 30 and 35 foot width roads equal the height of the curb, viz., five inches.

The grades of the south drive on center line and grades of the south curb adjoining the road were approved.

17. STANTON PARK LODGE: Major Ridley reported that the Sundry Civil Act for the fiscal year 1921 appropriates \$7,000 for a new combined lodge and comfort station in Stanton Park. After viewing a number of photographs and sketches the Commission expressed a preference for a hipped roof, plain wall, covered with lattice and vines, and a rough sketch along these lines was generally approved. The designs are to be again submitted for final approval. As to site, the Commission made an inspection on the grounds and recommended that the Stanton Park Lodge be placed on one of the quadrants of the park, off the axis. The south-east quadrant was thought preferable. The Commission recommended that the lodge be concealed by planting so as to make it as unobtrusive as possible.

18. SMITHSONIAN GROUNDS, LODGE AND COMFORT STATION: Major Ridley reported that the Sundry Civil Act for the fiscal year 1921 appropriates \$7,000 for

lodge and comfort station in the Smithsonian grounds. As to type of building, it will be satisfactory to the Commission to have it similar to that for Stanton Park. The Commission made an inspection on the grounds and recommended building this lodge and comfort station on either side of the new National Museum; to face Twelfth Street, or Ninth Street as extended into the Smithsonian grounds, off the axis of the National Museum and near D Street, depending upon utility.

19. MERIDIAN HILL PARK: Euclid Street treatment, submitted to the Commission on January 8, 1919, was resubmitted for minor treatment of rustications. Scheme on sheet 55 was approved. It was recommended that the panel indicated above the cornice be eliminated.

Lower Garden details: It was recommended that the exhedra be made a continuous seat instead of broken units. Piers are to remain but are to be restudied for spacing and details. Urns will remain on circular section but will be independent of planting filler for their effect. Terminal motifs are to be restudied to balance corresponding motifs across garden; with panel above ^{with} wall coping and pyramidal markers.

The entrance from Sixteenth Street may be treated with scrolls to bring down height of wall return. Opposing blocks in broad steps may be surmounted with lions similar to Borghesi pavilion. Detail of garden mosaic for color, interest or elimination of excessive walk area to be considered in connection with complete model of section. Height of hedge and of exhedra wall to be reconsidered at the same time.

The Commission had as their guests at the luncheon Mr. Edward . Donn, Jr., Mr. Louis A. Simon, and Mr. Percy Adams, the committee appointed by the American Institute of Architects to cooperate with the Commission of Fine Arts in

Chairman

completing plans for Washington, and Mr. E. C. Kemper, Executive Secretary of the Institute. Also Mr. Charles A. Michaus, sculptor.

After visiting the Army War College the Commission made an inspection trip on a launch furnished by Major Tyler, United States Engineer Office, up the Anacostia River to observe the progress of the work of the Anacostia Reclamation project, and later made an inspection trip about the city.

Approved:

C O P Y

July 12, 1920.

Dear Mr. Hisada:

The Commission gave consideration to your letter of June 17th, with which you submitted a sketch of a proposed tablet to commemorate the gift of the Japanese Cherry Trees to this country and stated your desire to take up this matter with the citizens of Tokyo on your return to Japan. The Commission highly appreciate your interest in this matter, and desire to cooperate with you to bring about the result contemplated.

The Commission recommend that you place the matter in the hands of a Japanese designer with a view to having him produce a work of art at once characteristic and adapted to the purpose. It would be well to have the designer prepare two or three sketches to be submitted to the Commission, showing the order of your preference. Enclosed are photographs showing the cherry trees along the Potomac Drive in Washington, and thereon is a mark (x) where the Memorial could be located.

I am sending you also under separate cover copies of the two latest reports of the Commission of Fine Arts.

Cordially, yours,

(signed) C. S. Ridley,

Major, Corps of Engineers,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Mr. Paul Kiyoshi Hisada,
1143 Connecticut Avenue,
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT A.



C O P Y

July 12, 1920.

Dear Major Shirley:

The Commission of Fine Arts, at its meeting on July 9th, gave consideration to the plans submitted by you concerning the Key Memorial.

The Commission regret that circumstances now are such as to preclude the possibility of having the Fort McHenry Park area developed in the immediate future. However, in order that the Key Memorial may be erected, the Commission recommend giving the statue such a setting as will make it feasible later to develop the park according to the plans which have been submitted. The Commission decided that the top of the curbing of the circle surrounding the Key Memorial monument shall be at the grade 27.0" above datum. This will mean raising the grade one foot on a gradual slope, which is not considered excessive.

Cordially, yours,

(signed) C. S. Ridley,

Major, Corps of Engineers,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

Major Joseph W. Shirley, Chairman,
Baltimore City Plan Committee,
Baltimore, Maryland.

EXHIBIT B.

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